

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions and listing of the claims in this application:

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:

1. (Previously Presented) A rubber composition for a pneumatic tire comprising (i) 100 parts by weight of a diene-based rubber and (ii) 5 to 120 parts by weight of carbon black having a particle size of 15 to 40 nm, a nitrogen absorption specific surface area N_2SA of 60 to 200 m^2/g and a pH of 1 to 5.

2. (Original) A rubber composition as claimed in claim 1, wherein a dibutyl phthalate absorption DBPA of said carbon black is 30 to 80 ml/100g.

3. (Previously Presented) A rubber composition as claimed in claim 1, wherein said diene-based rubber is at least one member selected from the group consisting of natural rubbers, polyisoprene rubbers, polybutadiene rubbers, styrene-butadiene copolymer rubbers and ethylene-propylene-diene terpolymer rubbers.

4. (Previously Presented) A rubber composition as claimed in claim 1, wherein said carbon black is carbon black having a particle size of 18 to 35 nm, a nitrogen absorption specific surface area N_2SA of 70 to 180 m^2/g , a dibutyl phthalate absorption DBPA of 35 to 75 ml/100 g and a pH of 2 to 4.5.

5. (Previously Presented) A rubber composition for a pneumatic tire comprising (i) 100 parts by weight of a diene-based rubber and (ii) 5 to 120 parts by weight of carbon black having a particle size of 15 to 40 nm, a nitrogen absorption specific surface area N_2SA of 60 to 200 m^2/g and a pH of 8.5 to 13.

6. (Previously Presented) A rubber composition as claimed in claim 5, wherein a dibutyl phthalate absorption DBPA of said carbon black is 30 to 80 ml/100g.

7. (Previously Presented) A rubber composition as claimed in claim 5, wherein said diene-based rubber is at least one member selected from the group consisting of natural rubbers, polyisoprene rubbers, polybutadiene rubbers, styrene-butadiene copolymer rubbers and ethylene-propylene-diene terpolymer rubbers.

8. (Previously Presented) A rubber composition as claimed in claim 5, wherein said carbon black is carbon black having a particle size of 18 to 35 nm, a nitrogen absorption specific surface area N_2SA of 70 to 180 m^2/g , a dibutyl phthalate absorption DBPA of 35 to 75 ml/100 g and a pH of 9 to 12.

9. (Previously Presented) A rubber composition as claimed in claim 2, wherein said diene-based rubber is at least one member selected from the group consisting of natural rubbers, polyisoprene rubbers, polybutadiene rubbers, styrene-butadiene copolymer rubbers and ethylene-propylene-diene terpolymer rubbers.

10. (Previously Presented) A rubber composition as claimed in claim 2, wherein said carbon black is carbon black having a particle size of 18 to 35 nm, a nitrogen absorption specific surface area N_2SA of 70 to 180 m^2/g , a dibutyl phthalate absorption DBPA of 35 to 75 ml/100 g and a pH of 2 to 4.5.

11. (Previously Presented) A rubber composition as claimed in claim 3, wherein said carbon black is carbon black having a particle size of 18 to 35 nm, a nitrogen absorption specific surface area N_2SA of 70 to 180 m^2/g , a dibutyl phthalate absorption DBPA of 35 to 75 ml/100 g and a pH of 2 to 4.5.

12. (Previously Presented) A rubber composition as claimed in claim 9, wherein said carbon black is carbon black having a particle size of 18 to 35 nm, a nitrogen absorption specific surface area N_2SA of 70 to 180 m^2/g , a dibutyl phthalate absorption DBPA of 35 to 75 ml/100 g and a pH of 2 to 4.5.

13. (New) A rubber composition for a pneumatic tire comprising (i) 100 parts by weight of a diene-based rubber and (ii) 5 to 120 parts by weight of carbon black having a particle size of

15 to 40 nm, a nitrogen absorption specific surface area N_2SA of 60 to 200 m^2/g and a pH selected from the group consisting of 1 to 5 and 8.5 to 13.